

ON THE IDENTITY OF *THECLA MUIRI*,
HENRY EDWARDS.

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When Henry Edwards described *Thecla muiri* in 1881 (Papilio, Vol. I, p. 53), he stated that it was "allied to *T. nelsoni* Bdv., but undoubtedly distinct." Nevertheless, W. H. Edwards in his catalogue of 1884 (Revised Cat. Diurnal Lep., etc.) places *muiri* as a variety of *T. nelsoni*, Bdv., with no comment. Other cataloguers (H. Skinner, H. G. Dyar) since then have followed suit and the insect has apparently escaped notice in literature except for these catalogue references and a reference and figure in Wright's Butterflies of the West Coast, which is erroneous.

I have recently been studying a series of *Thecla blenina* Hew., numbering about eighty specimens, about half of which were from Eureka and Stockton, Utah, and the others from Fort Wingate, New Mexico. In working over this material I found a predominance from the Utah localities of a form in which the general tone of the under side of the wings is a purple or violet brown. From New Mexico, on the other hand, the specimens are mainly of the typical form, with well defined green under-coloration. By working over the insects I found a complete set of intergrades between the two extremes of under-coloration and selected a series of thirty specimens which showed intergradation. This series presented wide minor color variations and some striking variability in the discal line of the secondaries.

Being familiar with the typical material of the Henry Edwards collection, I suspected that the purple form might agree with *T. muiri*, although I got no encouragement from a study of the original description. I took a series of specimens to the American Museum of Natural History for purpose of comparison, and found two females in my series which agreed with the type female of *muiri* in every particular except that the band across the disc of the primaries in the type started from the costa a shade nearer the apex than in my specimens. Upon examination of the other specimens in my series,

I observed a like amount of variation in the starting of this line in certain individuals, so that I selected the two females above mentioned as identical with the type. Male specimens in my series did not agree so closely with the type male *muiri*. The differences, however, were entirely in the shading of the ground color, and not in the marking. The marking of the type male and female of *T. muiri* were exactly identical with the marking of the majority of the specimens in my series. The result of my examinations is that I consider my series of what I had thought a purple form of *T. blenina* from Utah localities to be identical with the types of *T. muiri*, which came from Mendocino County, Cal.

I thus arrive at my main conclusion that *T. muiri* Hy. Edw., is related to *T. blenina* Hew., and not to *T. nelsoni* Bdv., to which it has heretofore been attributed. Secondly, I consider that the name *muiri* should be retained to designate the purple form as a variety of *T. blenina*, and that our lists should be corrected to read as follows:

***Thecla blenina*, Hew. var. *muiri* Hy. Edwards.**

In reference to the original description of *T. muiri*, I wish to point out that it is entirely inadequate and positively misleading to any one trying to identify an insect from it. The description omits mention of the ground color beneath the wings which, as the type insect shows, is a violet or purple brown shading with scattered black scales. Moreover, it points out a distinction between *T. muiri* and *T. nelsoni* which does not exist; namely that "the fringes (in *T. muiri*) are concolorous with the wings instead of white" (in *T. nelsoni*). The fringes in the type of *T. muiri* are not concolorous with the wings, but grayish and, in fresh specimens of the insect, of a sordid white. The fringes in *T. nelsoni* are grayish also and noticeably darker than the ground color of the wings, and not white.